

Application No. 09/707,926

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-8 (Canceled).

9. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method for processing a print job with geographically distributed print shops, comprising:

coupling a first set of print shops, a second set of print shops, and a central repository via a computer network; the first set of print shops having one print shop and the second set of print shops having a plurality of print shops;

sending to the central repository a production schedule representative of at least one print shop in the second set of print shops with access controls that allow visibility of its production schedule to include the print shop in the first set of print shops; each production schedule sent by a print shop to the central repository comprising data allowing a representation for graphically displaying [[of]] the respective production schedule;

retrieving, at the print shop in the first set of print shops from the central repository via the computer network when the print shop in the first set of print shops lacks sufficient printing capacity for processing the print job, the production schedules of print shops in the second set of print shops having access controls that permit visibility of their production schedules to the print shop in the first set of print shops; and

transferring, from the print shop in the first set of print shops to at least one print shop in the second set of print shops via the computer network, at least part of the print job when spare printing capacity is indicated in at least one retrieved production schedule of the second set of print shops;

wherein the print shop in the first set of print shops and the at least one print shop in the second set of print shops effect the transfer of the at least part of the print

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job independent of any centralized scheduling application while each print shop may operate a scheduling application of its choosing; and

wherein each production schedule projects a mapping between print jobs and print devices over a period of time.

10. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method according to claim 9, wherein the print shop in the first set of print shops graphically displays the production schedules of the second set of print shops retrieved from the central repository.

11. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method according to claim 10, wherein each of the print shops in the second set of print shops sends its respective production schedule to the central repository.

Claim 12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method according to claim 10, wherein at least some of the production schedules of the print shops in the second set of print shops are created from a digitized photograph of a hard copy rendering of their production schedules.

14. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method according to claim 9, further comprising limiting the production schedules of the print shops in the second set of print shops retrieved by the print shop in the first set of print shops from the central repository as a function of geographical location of the print shop in the first set of print shops and the print shops in the second set of print shops.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method according to claim 9, further comprising limiting the production schedules of print shops in the second set of print shops retrieved by the print shop in the first set of print shops from the central repository as a function of a user profile attached to the print shop in the first set of print

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shops.

16. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method according to claim 15, wherein the user profile of the print shop in the first set of print shops defines a set of preferred print shops from the second set of print shops.

Claims 17-20. (Canceled).

Please add the following claims:

21. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 16, further comprising limiting the production schedules of the print shops in the second set of print shops retrieved by the print shop in the first set of print shops from the central repository as a function of geographical location of the print shop in the first set of print shops and the print shops in the second set of print shops.

22. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 9, further comprising creating production schedule data suitable for a storage in the central repository with a computer-aided scheduling tool.

23. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 9, further comprising creating production schedule data suitable for a storage in the central repository by capturing an image of a human readable rendering of the production schedule.

24 (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 23, wherein the image of the human readable rendering of the production schedule is captured using a scanner or camera.

25. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 9, wherein the production schedule is delivered from the central repository to the first print shop only in cases that the first print shop satisfies access conditions which are defined by the plurality of print shops.

26. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 9, wherein

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said retrieving, at the print shop in the first set of print shops from the central repository via the computer network when the print shop in the first set of print shops lacks sufficient printing capacity for processing the print job, filters the retrieved production schedules of print shops in the second set of print shops.

27. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 26, wherein the first set of print shops only displays production schedules of the second set of print shops which are located within a pre-defined geographical region.

28. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 26, wherein the first set of print shops only displays production schedules of the second set of print shops which belong to a pre-defined group of preferred print shops.

29. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 9, wherein said sending sends to the central repository a production schedule representative of different levels of detail of at least one print shop in the second set of print shops with access controls that allow visibility of at least one of the different levels of detail of its production schedule to include the print shop in the first set of print shops.

30. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 29, wherein one level of detail of the production schedule includes details of customer deadlines for print jobs.

31. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 29, wherein one level of detail is a thumbnail representation of the production schedule.

32. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 9, wherein the period of time each production schedule projects a mapping between print jobs and print devices is a plurality of days.

33. (New) The computer implemented method according to claim 9, further comprising recording an image of a human readable rendering of the production schedule before sending it to the central repository.